

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MOSCOW 06105 01 OF 02 291652Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 EA-10 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05
H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02
SS-15 USIA-06 HA-05 IO-13 ACDA-12 /111 W
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R 291644Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9739
INFO AMEMBASSY COLOMBO
AMEMBASSY DACCA
AMCONSUL HONG KONG
CINCPAC HONOLULU HI
AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
AMEMBASSY KABUL
AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
AMEMBASSY PARIS
USLO PEKING
AMEMBASSY TOKYO
USMISSION USNATO

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 MOSCOW 06105

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: UR, PK, CH, IN
SUBJECT: SOVIET-PAKISTAN RELATIONS

REF: (A) MOSCOW 5271, (B) NEW DELHI 4297

SUMMARY: ALTHOUGH SOVIETS ARE UNHAPPY OVER BHUTTO SENTENCING, DURING THE PAST MONTH MOSCOW HAS TAKEN SOME VERY MINOR STEPS TO IMPROVE SOVIET-PAKISTAN RELATIONS. SOVIETS MAY BE ATTEMPTING TO SEND DELHI DISCRETE SIGNAL
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PAGE 02 MOSCOW 06105 01 OF 02 291652Z

ON SOVIET SENSITIVITIES REGARDING SINO-INDIAN RELATIONS. NEVERTHELESS, WE DO NOT ANTICIPATE ANY SIGNIFICANT SOVIET MOVES TOWARD ISLAMABAD. END SUMMARY.

1. ACCORDING TO ACTING DCM, PAKISTAN EMBASSY, CHIEF OF MFA'S SOUTH ASIA DEPT., N. G. SUDARIKOV, RECENTLY

CLOSELY QUESTIONED PAKISTAN AMBASSADOR ABOUT BHUTTO SENTENCING. SUDARIKOV ASKED WHY BHUTTO WOULD HAVE BEEN SO INTERESTED IN PARTICIPATING IN THE MURDER OF A MINOR PAKISTANI MILITARY FIGURE. THE PAKISTANI AMBASSADOR RESPONDED THAT A FULL BENCH OF THE LAHORE COURT HAD FOUND BHUTTO GUILTY AFTER EXAMINING THE EVIDENCE. SUDARIKOV EXPRESSED DISBELIEF THAT BHUTTO, AS PRIME MINISTER, WOULD HAVE PARTICIPATED IN THE MURDER OF SUCH A LOW-LEVEL POLITICIAN. (COMMENT: PAKS HERE BELIEVE SUDARIKOV WAS DELIBERATELY ATTEMPTING TO REGISTER SOVIET VIEW THAT THE ZIA REGIME IS USING THE MURDER CHARGES AND THE TRIAL TO REMOVE BHUTTO AS A POLITICAL THREAT. END COMMENT.) DURING EMBOFF CALL ON SUDARIKOV'S DEPUTY, B. Y. KIRNASOVSKIY, LATTER STATED THAT SOVIET-PAKISTAN RELATIONS ARE PROGRESSING WELL IN THE "THEORETICAL" AND "PRACTICAL" PLANES BUT HAVE SUFFERED ON THE "EMOTIONAL" PLANE BECAUSE OF RECENT EVENTS (E.G., BHUTTO SENTENCING). HE STATED THAT, TO HIS KNOWLEDGE, THE SOVIETS ARE NOT PLANNING TO SEND A REQUEST FOR CLEMENCY TO THE PAKISTAN GOVERNMENT.

2. NAIK VISIT: BOTH THE PAK EMBASSY AND KIRNASOVSKIY SAID NAIK'S CONVERSATIONS HERE DEALT ONLY WITH MULTILATERAL, MOSTLY SSOD ISSUES. ACTING PAK DCM TOLD EMBOFF HE DID NOT SEE THE MINUTES OF NAIK'S SSOD DISCUSSIONS BUT HE NOTICED THAT NAIK CLEARLY LEFT CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 03 MOSCOW 06105 01 OF 02 291652Z

MOSCOW "VERY HAPPY" WITH THE RESULTS. HE STATED NAIK WAS GOING TO TOKYO AND PEKING EN ROUTE HOME.

3. SOVIET-PAKISTAN RELATIONS - GENERAL: SAME PAKISTANI SOURCE THOUGHT THAT SOVIET-PAKISTAN RELATIONS HAVE IMPROVED OVER THE PAST MONTH. THE TWO SIDES SIGNED A NEW TRADE AGREEMENT IN MOSCOW LAST WEEK WHICH RAISED THE TRADE LEVEL BY 50 PERCENT. IN THE PAST, THE SOVIETS HAD REFUSED TO SELL TRACTORS TO PAKISTAN FOR CASH. PAKS ARE VERY PLEASED THAT THE TRADE AGREEMENT INCLUDES A BARTER ARRANGEMENT BY WHICH PAKISTAN WILL GET 2,000 SOVIET TRACTORS. SOURCE ALSO SAID NAIK'S VISIT WAS APPROVED BY THE SOVIETS ON ONLY FOUR DAYS NOTICE AND HE HAD A WARM RECEPTION IN MOSCOW. FURTHER, UNLIKE IN RECENT YEARS, RELATIVELY HIGH-RANKING VICE-CHAIRMAN OF THE SOVIET COUNCIL OF MINISTERS ATTENDED THE PAKISTANI NATIONAL DAY RECEPTION. SOURCE STATED THAT THESE RECENT DEVELOPMENTS, PARTICULARLY THE TRADE PACT, CONSTITUTE STEPS BY MOSCOW TO IMPROVE SOVIET-PAKISTANI RELATIONS. HE THOUGHT THAT THESE STEPS ARE RELATED TO THE RECENT INDICATIONS OF IMPROVEMENT IN SINO-INDIAN RELATIONS. HE STATED FURTHER THAT THE PROBABLE ASSUMPTION

OF POWER BY THE CONSERVATIVE PNA AND THE CONTINUING
DEMISE OF THE PPP WILL GREATLY LIMIT PROSPECTS FOR
IMPROVING SOVIET-PAKISTAN RELATIONS.

4. COMMENT: IT MAY BE SOMEWHAT MORE THAN A COINCIDENCE
THAT THESE RECENT, MINOR INDICATIONS OF A SOVIET DESIRE
TO RAISE THE TEMPERATURE IN SOVIET-PAKISTAN RELATIONS
COMES AT A TIME WHEN THE WANG PIN-NAN VISIT TO INDIA
AND THE PRC INVITATION TO VAJPAYEE HAVE RAISED POSSI-
BILITY OF AN IMPROVEMENT IN SINO-INDIAN RELATIONS. MOSCOW
COULD INDEED BE SIGNALLING NEW DELHI REGARDING ITS OWN

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PAGE 01 MOSCOW 06105 02 OF 02 291655Z

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 MOSCOW 06105

SENSITIVITIES ON THIS SCORE. HOWEVER, WE DO NOT ANTI-
CIPATE ANY REALLY SIGNIFICANT MOVES BY MOSCOW TOWARD
ISLAMABAD GIVEN (A) THE POTENTIAL OBSTACLES TO AN
IMPROVEMENT IN SOVIET-PAKISTAN RELATIONS POSED BY THE
DOMESTIC POLITICAL SITUATION IN PAKISTAN AND THE CLASH
OF SOVIET AND PAKISTANI INTERESTS ELSEWHERE, E.G.,
THE HORN, AND (B) ONGOING MUTUAL INDO-SOVIET INTERESTS
IN MAINTAINING CLOSE TIES, AND (C) DELHI'S CAUTION IN

DEALING WITH PEKING (REF B). WITHIN THIS OBVIOUSLY
CONSTRAINING FRAMEWORK, WE WOULD STILL EXPECT MOSCOW
TO ATTEMPT TO ADD TO ITS RECENT "SIGNALS" TO ISLAMABAD
SHOULD THE PACE OF IMPROVEMENT IN SINO-INDIAN RELATIONS
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PAGE 02 MOSCOW 06105 02 OF 02 291655Z

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